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THE BULLETIN *of the* MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

FEBRUARY

1934

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THE MUSEUM'S ACTIVITIES

1932—1933

Members and friends of the Museum often ask what is the extent of the institution's activities in educational and other fields not immediately apparent to the visitors in the galleries. A summary of the Museum's undertakings for the period from October 1932 to October 1933 follows.

A major activity of the Museum is the preparation and presentation of exhibitions which afford opportunities for study, comparison and enjoyment. Those held in the galleries during the year were:

Summer Exhibition, 1932: Modern European Art
Facsimiles of 17th century Persian Frescoes in Isfahan
American Painting and Sculpture, 1862-1932.
American Folk Art
Early Modern Architecture in Chicago, 1870-1910
Work of Maurice Sterne, 1902-1932
Objects of 1900 and Today
Work of Young Architects in the Middle West
American Sources of Modern Art
Posters by New York Public High School Students
Reproductions of Diego Rivera's Mexican Frescoes
Fruit and Flower Paintings
Drawings by Sculptors
Entries in Typography Contest
Summer Exhibition, 1933: Modern European Art

Attendances at the Museum for the year were 201,301, an increase of 22.7% over the previous twelve months.



International News Photo.

His Excellency, Alexander A. Troyanovsky, Ambassador of the U.S.S.R., welcomed at the opening of the International Theatre Art Exhibition by A. Conger Goodyear, President of the Museum



Water-color study by André Derain for the curtain of La Boutique Fantasque, Ballets Russes, 1919. Lent by M. Paul Rosenberg, Paris, to the International Exhibition of Theatre Art

Circulating Exhibitions

The exhibitions listed below have been circulated by the Museum in the United States and Canada:

- Whistler's "Mother," lent by the Louvre, shown in 6 cities
- Modern Architecture, with models, shown in 9 cities
- Modern Architecture, with photographs, shown in 7 cities
- Early Modern Architecture, Chicago, 1870-1910, shown in 4 cities
- Color Reproductions of Modern Painting (1) and (2) shown in 17 cities
- American Folk Art, shown in 3 cities
- Mural Paintings and Photo-Murals, shown in 4 cities
- Reproductions of Rivera's Mexican Frescoes, shown in 1 city

Over twenty works of art have also been lent by or through the Museum to other museums.

Publications

Catalogues of the following exhibitions were published, so valuable a source of reference that several have also been published as books in England:

- American Folk Art, 131 pages, 80 plates, with an introduction, notes and bibliography by Holger Cahill.
- American Painting and Sculpture, 1862-1932, 128 pages, 79 plates, with an introduction and notes by Holger Cahill.
- American Sources of Modern Art, 104 pages, 56 plates, with an introduction, bibliography and notes by Holger Cahill.
- Maurice Sterne Retrospective Exhibition, 52 pages, 23 plates, with an introduction by Horace Kallen and notes by the artist. Biography and bibliography by Holger Cahill.
- Brief Survey, a 16-page pamphlet with notes by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., to accompany the two circulating exhibitions of Color Reproductions of Modern Paintings.

The generosity of a friend of the Museum made it possible to publish the portfolio of reproductions of Diego Rivera's Mexican Frescoes with 19 full color-plates and 15 monotypes, the first color reproductions to appear of Rivera's frescoes in Chapingo, Cuernavaca and Mexico City.

The Museum Bulletin, the first issue of which appeared in May last year, is now published monthly from September to May.

Permanent Collection

Selections from the Permanent Collections and the Bliss Collection have been on view continuously since the opening of the new building in May 1932, except during the American Painting and Sculpture and the Maurice Sterne exhibitions.

Thirty-seven gifts in various media have been made to the permanent collection during the past year. The donors were Mr. Lincoln Kirstein, Mrs. Sadie A. May, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mr. Edward M. M. Warburg and Mr. Nathaniel S. Wolff.

In addition, over twenty-five paintings and sculptures are held at the Museum on semi-permanent loan.

Slides and Photographs

The Museum has a small collection of slides of modern painting and architecture, not easily obtainable elsewhere,

which it lends to museums, colleges, lecturers and students.

Collections of photographs of modern paintings have been received from several donors. These form the nucleus of a comprehensive collection of reproductions of works of modern art which the Museum is building up.

Registry

At its foundation the Museum, though hampered by lack of funds for this work, began to compile a list of modern works of art in this country, their owners and locations, especially in reference to private collections. This catalogue is not only of great use to the Museum's staff in preparing exhibitions but to other institutions. It was referred to frequently by Mr. Robert B. Harshe of the Chicago Art Institute while preparing the "Century of Progress" art exhibition.

Library

A library specializing in modern art, such as hitherto has existed nowhere else in the country, was brought into existence last year by gifts from numerous donors, and will shortly be made available to students as well as to Museum members. The books in the library now number 1,400, excluding sets of periodicals and catalogues. Requests for information and bibliographies are received from all parts of the country.

Education Committee

This committee, under the chairmanship of Mrs. W. Murray Crane, held three lectures during the season: by Thomas Benton on American Folk Art, by Dr. Herbert J. Spinden on American Sources of Modern Art and by Henry-Russell Hitchcock on Early Modern Architecture of Chicago.

More than twenty dozent talks have been given

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The Bulletin is a membership privilege. Single copies are not for sale.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

International Exhibition of Theatre Art continuing until February 26th. Directed by Mr. Lee Simonson of the Theatre Guild, and including drawings and models done during the last four centuries in France, Italy, England, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States.

SOVIET SECTION

The important section of models and designs from the U. S. S. R. which did not arrive in time to be included at the opening of the International Exhibition of Theatre Art is now on view in the galleries.

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

Machine Art, March 6th to April 16th. Directed by Mr. Philip Johnson, chairman of the Department of Architecture. This will include Industrial Items (springs, ballbearings, light bulbs, tubing, pistons), Household Appliances (kitchen sinks, bathroom units, saucepans), Scientific Instruments (microscopes, telescopes, vernier gauges), Chemical Glass and Porcelain (beakers, petri dishes and erlenmeyers), House Furnishings (ash trays, lamps, chairs, vases).

All these items will be chosen from the point of view of machine—as opposed to craft—design and manufacture; for their simple finish and proportion rather than for “modernistic” design.

LECTURE

On Friday, February 9th, at 8:45 p.m., Mr. Lee Simonson will give an address in the Museum galleries on “The Artist in the Theatre.” Admission \$1.00; free to members.

FILMS AND THE MUSEUM

The film, important artistic medium peculiar to the twentieth century, is still largely unexplored and unappreciated by cultivated Americans. People well acquainted with modern painting and literature and drama are often entirely ignorant of the best work of such great film directors as Dovzhenko, Stiller, Pabst, Pudovkin, Feyder, Chaplin and Eisenstein.

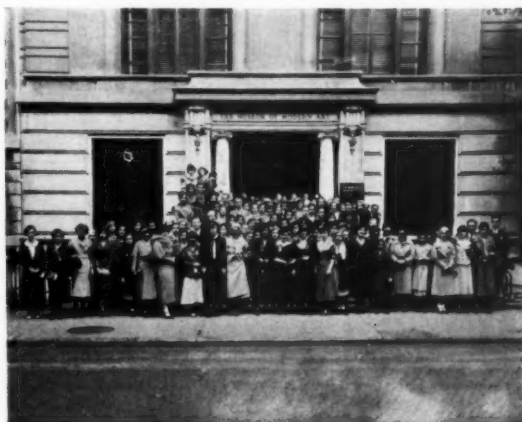
Expansion of the Museum to include a department of motion pictures is contemplated. When organized, it will show commercial films of quality, amateur and “avant-garde” films, and films of the past thirty years which are worth reviving because of their artistic quality or because of their importance in the development of the art. Gradually it is hoped to accumulate a collection of films of historic and artistic value.

With its comments on current motion-pictures in the Bulletin, the Museum indicates its continued interest in this art. The notes are written by Miss Iris Barry, noted motion-picture critic, founder of the original Film Society in London and director of the Film Society in New York. *Film Comments* have elicited more correspondence than any other feature of the Bulletin. One letter received curiously illuminates Hollywood conditions: Mr. John Ford, film director, whose “Dr. Bull” was recently praised in these columns, writes: “I must really see ‘Dr. Bull.’ I directed it but I haven’t seen it.”

FILM COMMENT

QUEEN CHRISTINA (Directed by Rouben Mamoulian)

Foredoomed love in high places, serviceable ingredient of popular fiction and drama, has been utilized as a “vehicle” for Garbo. A Spanish ambassador on his way to the Swedish court with a royal offer of marriage, shares a room in a crowded inn with a youth who proves to be a girl and too late is found to be Queen Christina. Ingenious dialogue and the frank love which the camera has for Garbo together create an illusion of depth and beauty.



New York public high school children on a visit to the Museum

Continued from page 2

by members of the staff to groups from educational institutions, among which were members of the Women's City Club of New York, the Federation of Women's Clubs of New York State and the Art Centre, Woodmere Art Group, Montclair Art Group, Garden City Community Club and Teachers Group of the School Art League.

Members of the staff have also given talks on modern art at women's clubs in and near New York. Through the School Art League, co-operation has been maintained with public high schools of the city.

Membership Committee

Under the chairmanship of Mrs. John S. Sheppard, the Membership Committee has succeeded in greatly increasing interest in the work of the Museum, chiefly through that best of all mediums—word of mouth advertising. As a result, the membership of the Museum has increased from about 500 to about 800.

Publicity

The publicity of the Museum is handled by members of its staff. Because of its many departments, the Museum receives comment from practically every section of the press from real estate to editorial, and is written about in periodicals as different as *Sky-scraper Management* and *Good Housekeeping*, *Railroad Weekly* and *Vanity Fair*. In addition to a large volume of local publicity, the Museum has tripled its national and doubled its foreign publicity.

Other Activities

During the past year, in addition to its work on exhibitions held in and out of the Museum, the Department of Architecture has brought about many improvements and innovations in the work of installation in the galleries. It is now preparing an exhibition of industrial design called "Machine Art," and has closely concerned itself with the possibilities of using good design in industrial manufacture. Requests for information and advice come to this department from all over the country.

In accordance with the belief that art should be more intelligently employed and appreciated throughout the world of business, the Museum has also organized the display of its own and other works of art in office buildings, and has included large department stores in the itineraries of its circulating exhibitions.

A much wider use of the radio has been made, and is planned in the future, by the Museum. In addition to local broadcasting and special national broadcasts in connection with major exhibitions, the Museum is now participating with the Metropolitan Museum and the Chicago Art Institute in a series of broadcasts on American Art, organized by the American Federation of Arts with the cooperation of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education. These will start on February 3rd at 8:30 p.m. over NBC and continue until the summer. The talks which the Museum will arrange follow in the fall and cover the period from 1865 to the present day. A catalogue illustrated with color plates will be published in connection with these lectures.

CONTEMPORARY PAINTERS AND THE BALLET

By LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

Scenery and costumes for ballets designed by a galaxy of contemporary artists from Picasso and Braque to Bérard and Tchelitchev, and their original sketches and paintings, are now to be seen in New York at the International Theatre Art Exhibition at the Museum, on the stage of the St. James Theatre, or have recently been seen in other theatres and at art galleries. Students of modern art feel a justifiable confusion about the appearance of successive ballet companies in New York and wonder where and how so many painters came to contribute to this branch of theatre art. A brief history of the ballet in the 20th century may be to the point.

In 1909 Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev, a wealthy Russian amateur of the arts, borrowed dancers from the Imperial (Marinsky) Theatre to give in Paris the first performance of Russian ballet in Western Europe. For twenty years the company that he formed astonished and delighted the world of art in European capitals and in 1915, with Vaslav Nijinsky, greatest male dancer of our time, toured America. During this period, Diaghilev drew upon the talents of Bakst, Roerich, Sert, Picasso, Derain, Matisse, Gris, Laurencin, Utrillo, Rouault and de Chirico for settings and costume-designs, as well as upon the music of Stravinsky, Debussy and Prokoviev, many of whose works were heard for the first time by Diaghilev audiences. At the same time the impresario's maitres de ballet, Fokine, Nijinsky, Massine and Balanchine gradually broke with the choreographic traditions of the "classical" ballet to create the more naturalistic and dramatic form that came to be identified with Diaghilev.

When Diaghilev died in Venice in 1929 attempts to keep his company together failed. The *Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo* was founded in 1931 with a few Diaghilev stars, and students from the White Russian ballet schools in Paris, under Massine as maitre de ballet. They own much of the scenery painted by Picasso, Derain and other artists for Diaghilev.

In 1933 Balanchine presented *Ballets 1933*, and produced ballets with settings by Derain, Bérard and Emilio Terry. Balanchine is now artistic director of the school of American Ballet recently founded in New York.

Serge Lifar, last star of the Diaghilev company, made an appearance in New York last fall. His collection of paintings and designs for ballets exhibited by the Julien Levy Galleries has been acquired by the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Conn.

A company not deriving from Diaghilev was also seen lately in New York—the *Joos Ballet*. Kurt Joos won first prize for his political satire "The Green Table," at Rolf de Maré's competition for choreographers, given in memory of the *Swedish Ballet* which he founded. The *Swedish Ballet* between 1920 and 1924 used settings and costumes by Bonnard, Steinlen, de Chirico and Léger.

